

THE NEW PLAYS

"The Love Drive"
Is Merely Energetic.

BY CHARLES DARNTON

ANYWAY, words are cheap in these expensive times, and Sydney Rosenfeld rolls them out at great length in "The Love Drive" at the Criterion Theatre without stopping to count the cost of syllables. The language he uses is so ornate that it suggests a cheap flat decorated by a amateur.

"The Love Drive" is merely energetic, not romantic. The Southerner who pursues a girl to New York and then follows her to a house on the Hudson, where she is employed as secretary, is distinguished only for the bad taste he displays. It is quite impossible from any point of view, and the wonder is that the well-bred girl who "resents marriage as a means of support" can tolerate him, especially after he has walked into her bedroom and placed her in a compromising position.

So far as comedy goes, however, this bedroom scene is the most amusing part of the play, for the pretty secretary says "Come in" to other knockers at her door until she has three men sitting on the edge of her bed. She does this to turn the tables, or the bed, on her persistent suitor. You may be sure she is innocent of the novel when she starts to read after she has slipped under the covers. Yet she finds herself giving a bedside reception to the insatiable Southerner, as well as a Britisher intent upon finding a co-respondent for the divorce suit he is anticipating, and a levesick old codger who blunders into the room with a bottle of medicine which has a taste for snakes. All along the Southerner has turned up his nose at marriage as something quite unnecessary to love, but he finally bows to the girl whose sense of decency is her safeguard.

Violet Heming, pretty and charming, especially with her hair down, acts simply and refreshingly. She does a very good job, while too, in the scenes where she has found a job in a house on the Hudson when she sits in a most attractive sun parlor. Another pretty young woman, Eileen Wilson, is decorative as a silly brideeek dazzled by an engagement ring. Hilda Spong gives intelligence to a widow worshipped by a fat old sentimental, though for some unknown reason she likes her man to be fat, and inclined to talk at the top of her lungs. Happily she tucks down a bit after the first act. Fred Nibley is painfully vociferous throughout the play. As the presumably irresistible Southerner he acts like a book agent with a strong leaning toward the dictatorial. His performance is a mixture of "nerve" and sound. He makes the mistake of being only half-answering to his role. Arthur Grant is amusing as the devoted admirer of the widow, though it must be said that he never resists the temptation to resort to boorishness. Arthur Lacey is an impossible Englishman given to haw-haws, b'joves and the "bally" sort of thing, but Zeffie Tilbury as Mrs. Harden gives distinction to a play sadly in need of it.

Plays for the Coming Week

MARIE DORO will be presented by Arthur Hopkins in "Barbara" at his new Plymouth Theatre in West 45th Street on Monday afternoon. The play, written by Florence Lincoln, is said to be a fan-

SOME STAGE STARS WHO APPEAR IN NEW YORK THEATRES NEXT WEEK



BILLY FOSTER AND FRANKIE
BURLESCUE WITH BOWERY
BURLESQUE STARS. HURTING AND
SHAMON.

tastic comedy. In the supporting company are John Miltern, Lillian Dix, Frank Bacon, Mrs. Margaret Pealy, Helen Tracy, Robert Hudson, Edna Baker and Walter D. Greene. Interpretative music has been composed and arranged by Elliott Schenck.

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